

This is

Annual Report
2022–23



strength
support
compassion
caring
resilience
recognition
connection

Contents



Intro from our Chair



2025 will mark the end of our current strategic plan and our 60th anniversary. As we move closer, we've got much to celebrate and so much more left to do. Now more than ever we must raise awareness of what caring is and who carers are. Each day we see the intense pressure and stress carers are under as the NHS continues to be overwhelmed and social care under-resourced.

I'm incredibly proud of what Carers UK has achieved over the last year. The team has successfully pivoted through an unprecedented pandemic and is now consolidating our services and influence to address the cost of living crisis. Our influence and impact are growing despite the financial challenges for charities generally at present.

The Vision 2025 direction of travel has proved to be a well-targeted and ambitious set of guiding aims and principles. Given the political, social and economic turmoil of the last year, having a more flexible strategic framework, rather than a rigid set of objectives, means we have been able to respond more quickly to new crises and capitalise more effectively on new opportunities. But that's only been possible because of the people who make up Carers UK.

But, in spite of the turmoil around us, there have been major steps forward. In particular the Carer's Leave Bill is almost certain to become law, providing a right to unpaid leave for carers.

Carers UK has campaigned for this for over two decades. This will provide a huge opportunity to ensure workplaces everywhere adapt to become carer friendly, which should have ramifications for carers in work and beyond.

I have seen first-hand that the team at Carers UK are deeply passionate about what they do.

Each individual is driven by the desire for better recognition of, and better support for, the millions of unpaid carers in the UK. But it is only with the support of hundreds of organisations, our thousands of members and millions of individuals beyond, that we can work towards a future where all carers can feel they have equal rights, and are properly supported and recognised in society.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Baird'. The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Nick Baird – CMG CVO
Chair

Intro from our Chief Executive



Looking back over the last year, I'm prouder than I've ever been of Carers UK. After the intensity of COVID-19 subsided for most, unpaid carers across the UK were still facing limitations and deprivations as they cared for some of the most vulnerable people in society. In Westminster, Government ministers came and went at an alarming rate. In Northern Ireland, Stormont still refused to sit, all of this stalling proper progress on life-changing legislation. And then, the cost of living crisis hit. Just when you thought life couldn't get more complicated, it did.

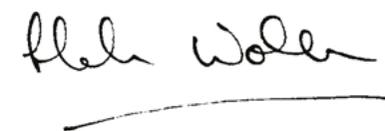
But throughout this year, every single person I've worked alongside at Carers UK has shown incredible levels of resilience, strength, creativity and passion. To still be moving forward, despite everything, speaks volumes to the tenacity of what we're doing and how we're working. Our colleagues, supporters, partners and beneficiaries have come together on so many occasions to provide help and support to each other, all in the name of improving life for unpaid carers. And despite the perma-crisis creating the most challenging landscape for generations, we've still moved forward with support, with recognition and with equality for unpaid carers.

We've increased our membership and the amount of resources and support available for people caring right now. We've kept our longer Helpline opening hours, added more online meetups and have restarted opportunities for carers to meet face-to-face. We've kept working with hundreds of employers who represent millions of people, helping them identify and support unpaid carers in the workplace. We've trained health and social care staff to recognise unpaid carers, making sure they understand how best to support them and ensure their rights are upheld, for example when someone they're caring for leaves hospital. And we've seen caring move up the agenda through our constant campaigning, lobbying, discussing, listening, researching as we move closer to equality for unpaid carers. Through the progress made with the Carer's Leave Bill, new rights protected

within the Health and Care Act, working rights laid out in the Flexible Working Bill, and many more, we are getting where we need to be.

Substantial, sustainable change doesn't come quickly. Some of our day-to-day efforts take decades to pay off. Every carer we support, every supporter we gain, every partnership formed, every politician engaged, every person who now understands the commitment unpaid carers are making, many in the hardest possible conditions and at real detriment to themselves, is because of the expertise, commitment and energy that I see every day from colleagues across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

As we approach the end of our current strategy and begin planning for the next, I am more positive than ever that we are moving towards a better world for carers. Thank you to every single person who supports our cause, and I can't wait to report back on even more successes next year.



Helen Walker
Chief Executive

This is...

the year
the world
outdid
itself



Without
unpaid carers

our national health and care systems would collapse immediately

Looking back over the last couple of years, it seems incredible to say life is now harder for millions of carers. We've all been impacted by the political turmoil that's led to a deepening cost of living crisis, jet propelled energy prices, with interest rate hikes causing real financial pain and deepening anxiety.

Then came the public sector strikes, increasing pressure on a health and care system that is still reeling from COVID-19. Essential frontline and community services are still hard to come by, as is adequate respite care. The only things flourishing in the paid care sector are vacancy rates and disillusionment.

This is *resilience*



Carers are stretched to the limit – juggling care with work and family life, struggling to make ends meet and often battling with poor health themselves.

“The past 12 months have been the most challenging, sad and life-changing months of my life. I turned to Carers UK, and I’m so immensely glad that I did.”

Annette

Carers are not other people

The pandemic was a high watermark in scale and awareness of caring. Millions of us became carers overnight. And although the shadow of COVID-19 has receded for many, those caring for someone vulnerable are still living with the same fears. Carers are more likely to be affected by long Covid. Their lives are still marked by isolation, and increasingly now, deprivation.

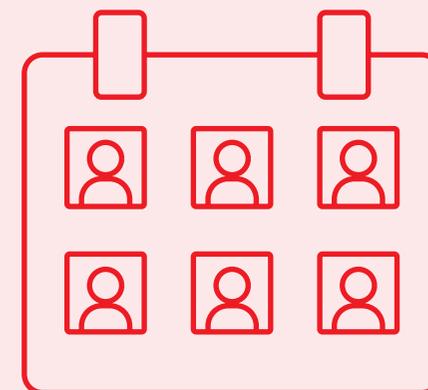
And for carers facing closed services and skyrocketing bills, there is a heightened, compound effect. Caring for someone at home who is older, disabled or vulnerable means more money is spent on energy bills, cleaning products, food and heating. Cutting or closing care services that enable a carer to work means they can't bring in money to cover even basic, and constantly rising, costs. These multiple, concurrent crises which are worrying for so many of us, are breaking carers every day. More calls to our Helpline are from carers who can't cope and don't know how – or even if – to continue.

According to the most recent Census figures, there are an estimated 5.7 million unpaid carers in the UK. Our research in 2022 estimates the

number of unpaid carers could be as high as 10.6 million through a severe lack of self and societal recognition of what it means to provide care. Unpaid carers are spending more hours caring, filling in for frontline staff and community services that never reopened after lockdown.

This vital unpaid care is valued at £530 million every day, higher even than the economic value of the NHS. Unpaid carers have had an economic value of more than £490bn since the beginning of the pandemic, and families in every community are doing the work of 4 million paid care workers, often at a cost to their own health and wellbeing. With vacancy rates in care staff at 16% in Scotland, for example, there simply aren't enough care staff.

On average, 12,000 people in the UK become an unpaid carer every single day and around the same number stop being carers. You can become a carer in an instant and stop just as quickly, meaning the need for dynamic support and information is ever present. That's why this year, we've kept developing our carer support offer, including maintaining our Helpline, a broader range of information, more virtual and physical meet-ups, and more peer and expert advice and guidance.



On average, 12,000 people in the UK become an unpaid carer every single day

(Petrillo and Bennett, 2022)

Neither the
recognition
nor the *support*
to be equal



Recognition is still too low among the general public, businesses, public sector services and employers. When society doesn't understand carers, it's not surprising it still takes on average two years for a person to recognise themselves as one. And the longer it takes to see yourself as a carer, the longer it takes to get the right support that can start to make a difference.

Carer's Allowance is the lowest benefit of its kind, currently £76.75 per week and only available to carers who provide more than 35 hours a week of unpaid care. Because of the structure and rules around the benefit system, carers in part-time work, those on Carer's Allowance and legacy benefits, carers not receiving means-tested benefits and those not living with the person they care for have, on average, missed out on £3,000 each in the last year alone.

With many health and social care services still offline following the pandemic, and strikes and cuts added in, the chance of a break or respite is insubstantial at best. Every single piece of evidence we see shows the starkness of the situation. Carers aren't just at breaking point. They are broken.

It's not hyperbole to say the situation literally can't continue. It can't because every day, carers are burning out and going under, even as they prop up the health and care systems. For the first time, the impact of caring on their own physical and mental health has topped carer's concerns. Their mental health, their physical health and their financial stability are attacked every day. And this is happening to millions of people, caring for millions more. For every unpaid carer who is struggling, the person they're caring for is also being affected.

It's not a disaster waiting to happen. It is happening right now.

*It's not a disaster
waiting to happen.
It is happening
right now.*

This is...

recognition

The biggest response ever to our annual survey. Cross-party political support in all nations for the rights of unpaid carers. Increased recognition in landmark Bills and Acts. Higher awareness in the media and the general public. It's been a year where our message has hit home that 'we are all carers'.

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State of caring survey

and 'Heading for Crisis' report

Our 2022 survey for carers, the biggest of its kind in the UK, closed in September, and formed the evidence for our *Heading for crisis* report in October. This year, 13,000 unpaid carers told us their stories and experiences, our biggest ever response and a significant increase from last year. This shows the strength of unpaid carers' support for our work and how desperate they are to get their voices heard.

Because many unpaid carers have less time to do paid work, it's harder for them to have any kind of financial security. That's why simply being unable to afford to live is an overwhelming fear for so many unpaid carers this year. A quarter of carers cut back on household essentials, more than a third spent over 20% of their income on gas and electricity bills and 1 in 6 unpaid carers are now living in debt because their caring role means they can't earn enough money.

Alongside personal money worries, the continued crumbling of the health and care system is piling pressure upon pressure. A fifth of unpaid carers are waiting over a month simply to see a GP, over a third are waiting more than a year for specialist treatment and 41% of unpaid carers haven't had a break for the last 12 months. This is directly damaging people's health, with 67% of unpaid carers on an NHS waiting list telling us their mental and physical health was now worse.

The figures speak for themselves. There's still too little progress, and it's still too slow. That's why in our *Heading for crisis* report, published in October, we called on the Government to develop a National Carers Strategy for England, to increase investment in social care so unpaid carers can get a break, and to review and reform carers' benefits and access to NHS and support services.

Without the evidence of the State of Caring survey, we'd never be as effective at influencing decision makers, providing targeted support services, helping employers and getting real change happening faster. For example, we've developed more financial advice and guidance for carers, as well as a Money Matters Hub for Welsh carers, and have more ways to get connected so unpaid carers can share their stories and experiences. Thank you to each and every person who took part.

Over a quarter (27%) of carers filling in our State of Caring survey in 2022 said they had a disability



This is *strength*



Carers are holding families together, enabling those they care for to get the most out of life and making an enormous contribution to society, yet many are stretched to the limit.

“Think ahead a little so that things are in place when you need them. And try to get some time for yourself to recharge the batteries.”

Jackie

A significant step closer

to the Carer's Leave Act



If everyone is to understand the power and scale of unpaid care, we need legislation that reflects reality.

If everyone is to understand the power and scale of unpaid care, we need legislation that reflects reality. And this year we're now one step closer towards a truly transformational piece of legislation.

With the backing of Lord Fox, member of the House of Lords, Wendy Chamberlain MP, hundreds of employers and thousands of supporters and carers, in March 2023 the Carer's Leave Bill passed Second Reading in the House of Lords.

If – and we absolutely believe when – the Carer's Leave Bill becomes law, it will mean all employees across Great Britain have the right to five days of unpaid Carer's Leave every year. This will make a huge difference to unpaid carers desperately trying to juggle work and caring responsibilities, and for many will mean the difference between staying in rather than giving up paid work.

2 million carers and 1.4 million employers are likely to be impacted throughout Great Britain. The Bill will hugely improve the recognition – and self-recognition – of unpaid

carers, transforming understanding within workplaces as we work with employers to provide the support individuals need to access this leave. It's also an incredible step forward for the equality of unpaid carers. Having working life adapt around caring elevates its status, and moves us forward as a society in understanding the immense value of unpaid caring

The story of getting the Bill this far has been one of decades of meticulous research, influence and campaigning, and shows the power of working together to make change happen. We've used our networks of employers, Carers UK members, and Carers UK colleagues from all nations to keep unpaid care high on the agenda and to move this vital legislation forward.

We are indebted to Wendy Chamberlain for submitting Carer's Leave as a Private Members' Bill when it didn't appear in the Queen's Speech. There are still some steps in the process to go, but we're looking forward to celebrating a victory that offers real, practical support sooner, to millions of unpaid carers.

A National Carers Strategy for Scotland

Published in December, following extensive engagement with the Scottish Government, we welcomed the new National Carers Strategy. This is a landmark moment in the recognition of the role of unpaid carers. It's helping increase understanding of the combination of threats to the wellbeing of carers because of COVID-19, a cost of living crisis and a barely functioning health and care system happening at the same time. In a significant move, it recognises caring as a social determinant of health, and that if you're a carer, you are more likely to face health issues of your own and less likely to live as long as someone who isn't a carer.

The strategy spoke of the importance to society of unpaid carers. Our close work with the Scottish government, bringing our expertise and the lived experience of unpaid carers, has helped ensure actions include working with employers to improve workplaces and work conditions, ensuring unpaid carers can access support during the cost of living crisis, and developing ways to ensure unpaid carers get the breaks and respite they need to keep caring effectively.

Coalitions born out of crisis

In January 2023, we established the Carer Poverty Commission in Northern Ireland to develop new ideas to tackle the causes of poverty among Northern Ireland's unpaid carers. The commission, which will run for a year, will look at why poverty happens among unpaid carers in Northern Ireland, the scale of poverty and then develop new policy recommendations.

In February, we launched the Carer Poverty Coalition in the UK. Over 100 organisations have come together, campaigning to end carer poverty, reform the benefit system, support carers in – and to stay in – paid work and build recognition and equality on the same scale as the value unpaid care provides.

Some of the largest and most influential organisations have joined the coalition, including Oxfam GB, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Age UK. As the voice for unpaid carers in the UK, our continued and close connection means we understand how the cost of living crisis is impacting them in multiple ways. For a significant number of carers it has been a question of 'heat or eat' during the last few months, with many also struggling to pay to keep life supporting machines, such as respirators, turned on. We are using this lived experience with our expertise to lead the coalition forward and make the Government sit up, take notice and implement changes that so many unpaid carers cannot continue without.

Making sure rights aren't rolled back

The Health and Care Act, which came into force on 1 July 2022, finally made sure NHS hospital trusts in England must involve unpaid carers as soon as is feasible when plans for a patient's discharge are being made.

Making sure these essential rights are protected won cross-party support, under the formidable leadership of Baroness Pitkeathley. Without this protection, it would be so much harder for unpaid carers to get the right care package in place when a loved one leaves hospital, meaning it would be so much tougher for them to cope.

Now these rights are in place, we're working with the NHS, local and community organisations, GPs and health professionals to make sure they can support unpaid carers at this critical time.

A boost for equality

In July, after constant campaigning, unpaid carers were finally included in the autumn vaccine booster programme for COVID-19, as well as the annual free flu jab.

Throughout the first half of 2022, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) hadn't listed unpaid carers as a potential eligible group for the autumn booster programme, causing uncertainty and distress for thousands. Through the impact of collective power we were able to influence at the highest levels to get the recognition and clarity needed to keep carers safer.



We're working with the NHS, local and community organisations, GPs and health professionals to make sure they can support unpaid carers at this critical time.

This is *recognition*



Carers often feel invisible, overlooked and discriminated against. Recognising the needs of carers in planning and service delivery will help improve their lives.

“It’s not just about visiting my brothers – it’s about being involved in their care plans, care reviews and future planning. My brothers are non-verbal, so I act as their voice and speak up for them.”

Matthew



Keeping work flexible

Hybrid working saved the economy during the pandemic, and it opened up the possibility for millions of people to better balance paid work and domestic life. But as society and places of work open back up, the pressure is on for unpaid carers to find a way to keep caring and keep their jobs.

We've been campaigning for unpaid carers to have flexible working rights from day one of a job. We were thrilled in December 2022 when the Government confirmed plans for a new Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Bill that would give workers the right to make two flexible working requests in any 12-month period without having to explain how the request would affect the employer. As the cost of living crisis impacts so heavily on unpaid carers, removing this added anxiety makes a huge difference, and employers benefit as well from improved productivity, staff recruitment and retention.

Holding services to account in Wales

We know unpaid carers feel invisible. Never more than when they don't receive the service they are entitled to, and feel it's impossible to be heard.

That's why we worked closely with the Welsh Public Service Ombudsman to highlight the concerns of unpaid carers in Wales. Many unpaid carers told us it's too hard to access carer needs assessments, and health and local authority complaint processes just aren't good enough. As a result of our close relationship with the Ombudsman and our ability to influence at the highest level, the Ombudsman agreed to do their 'own initiative' investigation to identify recommendations and share good practice.



Increasing the 'Peer' pressure

Also in December, a report by the House of Lords Adult Social Care Committee was published, outlining the state of the adult social care sector and strongly highlighting the role of unpaid carers. We worked closely with the Committee to provide extensive evidence from our network, members, supporters and Employers for Carers, filling the report with the voices of those experiencing the realities of caring today.

We now need to keep the pressure on the Government to make sure these recommendations are implemented as quickly as possible, and real, practical support gets to the carers who need it most.

A new covenant for carers

We were delighted to provide expertise, evidence and carers' experiences to help shape a new report published in January 2023 by the Archbishop's Commission on Reimagining Care.

The report calls for more choice in who provides care and a New Deal for unpaid carers, including a review of Carer's Allowance, a greater emphasis on carers' own health and wellbeing, and a more personalised approach that understands and responds to the relationships involved in caring.

This is... equality at work



**1 in 5 employees
in the UK are
unpaid carers**

Paid work is more important than ever for unpaid carers. And to balance paid work and unpaid care, you need supportive employers who understand. We're incredibly pleased at the resilience of Employers for Carers in England and Wales and Carer Positive in Scotland over the last 12 months. Employers for Carers, boasting a new website, new training materials and a host of new digital resources, has achieved a 90% retention rate. In Scotland, Carer Positive now works with employers representing almost half a million employees, showing the increasing impact the service is having on lives throughout the country.

As we prepare for the impact of the Carer's Leave Bill becoming law, we're working closely with employers every day so they can better encourage and support their staff to identify as carers in the workplace. When one in five employees in the UK are carers, our work is helping normalise care in the workplace, and we've been so excited at the genuine levels of support for the Bill from employers. Like us, they see how important this is to the unpaid carers they employ.

Throughout the year, we've increased our work with Government departments and public sector employers, both hugely influential sectors for increasing equality and recognition for carers and delivering practical support.

Our continued relationship with NHS England provides wider access to work with GPs, helping them identify more unpaid carers earlier, meaning they get support and signposting to help and services sooner. Working with NHS staff is also a key route to ensuring health workers understand the rights and needs of unpaid carers at the point of hospital discharge, supporting the carer in accessing the help they're entitled to. We've also begun piloting an enhanced Employers for Carers service with Leeds City Council, who employ over

14,000 people and are one of the largest employers in the local area.

This year, we've also provided training sessions for 340 NHS case workers and Welsh Government employees in every local authority in Wales, helping them empower unpaid carers to be actively involved in decisions and services for themselves and the people they care for. Through work like this, we're practically changing how local authorities view unpaid carers, helping them understand their legal responsibilities.

To ensure support is there for every unpaid carer who needs it, we're thrilled to see the Tribe project, designed to identify gaps in care services across geographic areas, begin to be fully operationalised. It's now been commissioned by five Local Authorities, and as the formal project comes to an end, we've been collaborating with the Tribe users to see how we can continue to co-produce this fantastic service, and the content it delivers, into the future.

So when the Home Office called our service the best value for money they've ever seen, it made us even more confident that increasing our reach is bringing benefits for employers, services and unpaid carers alike.

This is...
**support
 today**

For millions of unpaid carers, getting practical support from an expert who understands can be the difference between not knowing where to turn and having a good day with the person they love.

As more and more carers are deeply impacted by the combination of the cost of living crisis and an overloaded health and care system, we've seen our membership increase to 47,000 over the last 12 months. It's proof we're a much-needed service at scale. We want more carers to access our services, whether that's through

our Helpline services or the refined and expanded information available on our websites. When financial help is so vital to unpaid carers right now, this new information is direct from carers sharing their own stories, based on lived experience of dealing with impacts of rising prices, limited opportunities for paid work, and meagre benefits. We've also developed new health, fitness and wellbeing content focused around supporting carers to keep active, and launched new bite-sized learning animations which are getting great feedback.

Our online forum has been revamped to make it more accessible, and we're already seeing far more engagement from more members. We've increased the opportunities for carers to talk and share. For example, we're now running up to seven online meetups every week across Care for a Cuppa, focused on peer-to-peer support, and Share and Learns, where visiting speakers share tips and skills on a range of topics. And to make sure we're reaching as many carers as possible, we've ramped up sessions throughout the day and evening to make them more accessible, and added dedicated meetups that represent the diversity of carers, including spaces for Black, Asian and minority ethnic carers and LGBTQ+ carers.

We know access to information can lead to new benefits and support that change the world for an unpaid carer. That's why we created the Money Matters Hub in Wales to provide as much information as possible to help unpaid carers find resources to help with finances. The Hub includes specific information on Welsh government benefits, and meant many unpaid carers in Wales were able to access winter fuel payments when the weather and money worries were at their harshest.

We've also developed a bespoke complaints mini-guide for Wales, complete with template letters, to make sure unpaid carers in Wales are able to get their voice heard when speaking up for their rights.

It has been disappointing to have had to close our Listening Support Service in March 2023, which we knew was making such a difference to so many unpaid carers. The funding for the service has unfortunately come to an end and the continued severity of the financial environment means that, like so many organisations, we can't resource everything we know would help.



**2 in 3 people
 will be carers**

This is *support*



Whether it's accessing expert advice and information or a friendly person to turn to on the worst of days, the right support can make all the difference.

"Never hesitate to ask for help. Don't try to do it all yourself or you will not be able to provide the care you want to."

Chris

This is... evidence

Research ensures our support services are effective, and our policies, campaigns and lobbying work push forward recognition and equality for unpaid carers. Evidence is at the root of all progress, so thank you to every unpaid carer, employer and supporter who lent us their lived experience over the last year.

Here are a few highlights



1.

In September 2022, we presented research based on the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual carers during and beyond the pandemic. It showed they were more likely to be struggling financially, feel more lonely, be more likely to have poorer mental health and less likely to access services. This led to our good practice briefing for supporting LGBTQ+ carers in February 2023, encouraging organisations with how best to support unpaid carers who are LGBTQ+.

2.

We also released our report, 'The experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic carers during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.' which found carers from Black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds were more anxious about their current financial situation and more likely to be impacted by the closure of local services. This research then led to a good practice briefing for supporting Black, Asian and minority ethnic carers in February 2023.

3.

In March 2023, working with Danone UK & Ireland, we released research showing the majority of unpaid carers worry about whether their loved ones are getting good nutrition and hydration, a significant and growing issue within the caring community.

This is...

strengthening relationships

Reaching our vision of a society that recognises, values and supports carers won't be done alone. Every member, supporter, colleague, partner, employer and volunteer is essential to progress.

This year we've been improving how we engage with all of our audiences, including new websites for Carers UK (including the nations), Employers for Carers (EfC) and Carer Passport site, kicking off a new Customer Relationship Management software project, improving our members' forum and developing new information and advice content, and increasing the time and ways unpaid carers can connect with us and each other.

Through this sustained, strategic effort, we've increased our membership and our media reach, and been inundated with positive feedback from all our different audiences.



Keeping our finances resilient

It's been a tough year to fundraise, whichever charity you are. As bills and interest rates rise, disposable income is constricted for everyone, making income from challenge events and direct debits more precarious.

Businesses are feeling the pinch as well as individuals, as shareholder pressure makes companies of all sizes review their Corporate Social Responsibility activities. The financial crisis has had a negative impact on legacy income and trusts and foundations are receiving more applications from other deserving charities, trying to support beneficiaries who are all reeling from the blows of the economic storm we're going through.

The bottom line is we've raised around £2.6 million in voluntary income, including around £1 million from Trusts. We're proud of what such a small, but absolutely dedicated team were able to achieve in the most challenging fundraising environment many of us have ever seen.

We are grateful to each and every individual and organisation who has given us support. Sadly, too many charities have gone under this year. We feel it's testament to the strength of our work and the resolve of each and every person who gives their voice, their influence, their story and their strength to Carers UK that we have managed to keep progressing towards our vision, helping millions of carers every day.



We are grateful to each and every individual and organisation who has given us support.



Our volunteer heroes

This year has seen a step change in our work with volunteers. They've contributed to the running of our forum, the development of our information, the organising of our online sessions and community meetups. They've shared their expertise and their experiences. They've come to us with the problems they face and the solutions they've found. They've given evidence to government committees

and been there for other unpaid carers when they're finding it impossible to cope.

While being an unpaid carer is almost all-consuming, giving time to help others is an incredible act. And we're so grateful for every person who has helped us support and advocate for unpaid carers over the last year. Thank you.

It's been a good year for getting our name and mission out there.

Raising our profile

It's been a good year for getting our name and mission out there. As well as overwhelming cross-party support in the Lords, we're increasing our influence on every political level in every nation. We're meeting with more ministers and decision makers, and being looked to more and more as the voice for carers in the UK, seeing caring moving up the agenda and being discussed and reported on more regularly.

This is *connection*



Looking after someone can be a rewarding experience. It can also be tough, lonely and bewildering. But we're here to help carers feel less alone.

"So often we feel forgotten, and it can be a very lonely and frightening experience as a carer. So, when the opportunity arose, I felt it was an opportunity to reach out and let other carers know how I was feeling."

Dorothy

The highest recognition yet

This year Carers Scotland has become the second most mentioned organisation in the country for influencing work with Members of the Scottish Parliament and the media, across any sector or category. It's helped us influence upcoming legislation on the National Care Service and the new Carer Support Payment. In Northern Ireland, despite the lack of a functioning executive, we have still established ourselves among politicians and the media as the go-to organisation for caring and carers, and have extensive support across all parties.

Through the UK, our media profile has continued to increase, and we've had substantial coverage across broadcast, print and online. This includes 1,500 national and regional broadcast interviews on subjects including COVID-19 testing, the cost of living crisis and Carers Week.

We were regularly featured and quoted in the national and local press, including the *Observer*, *Daily Express*, and *The Independent*. We were thrilled to feature

84% of the general public backed calls for the UK governments to provide more financial support

Carers Week research



in a five-page article on carers in *Which?* magazine, an interview with Helen Walker in the *New Statesman*, and coverage in hundreds of local newspapers. In total, Carers UK was featured in print media over 700 times, and over 3,500 times in online outlets.

Helen, our Chief Executive, also appeared on *The One Show* and *BBC Breakfast* to discuss carers' experiences and the 2022 State of Caring report, and our statistics were used as part of a BBC Panorama investigation into the cost of living crisis.

Carers Week and Carers Rights Day

For Carers Week 2022 in June, we came together with major charities to encourage the Government to provide more targeted support for unpaid carers through a Recovery and Respite Plan. We called for support around breaks, respite and care services, infection control, identification of carers, financial help and support to juggle work and care. Although the Government said they had no plans as yet to increase support, all the charities involved continue to push for the Plan.

Carers Week is a great time to boost our profile, and we used it to launch new research that showed carers' own physical and mental health was their top concern. We found that 84% of the general public backed calls for the UK governments to provide more financial support and investment in services so that unpaid carers can have a break.

In November 2022, we used Carers Rights Day to highlight the cost of caring beyond the financial, and how it impacts on a carer's health as well as their finances. We used the increased awareness of the day to call for more support for individuals, employers and organisations to understand and advocate for carers' rights, and highlight where and what support was available.

Our brilliant partners

As well as the support we receive from national Governments, we'd like to acknowledge the huge generosity of the following organisations.

In Wales, we want to recognise the incredible partnership we have with Wales and West Housing Association. The partnership is worth £10,000 over three years, and just as important is the genuine support and interest Wales and West have in our work and our aims to improve the lives of unpaid carers throughout the UK.

In Northern Ireland, we want to say a massive thank you to The Community Foundation who have funded two major pieces of work, the Carer Poverty Commission and our carer advocacy and voice project.

We also want to thank Pears Foundation, Sport England, Regina Blitz and the COVID-19 Support Fund.



Thank you

Thank you to our donors and partners with whom we work.

Once again, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the many people and organisations who have empowered us to carry out our charitable work this year.

Through working in commercial partnerships with organisations and receiving generous donations from individuals, companies, charitable trusts and statutory funders, we can continue to reach, connect and support carers – no matter where they are in the UK.

Thank you all for your outstanding support.

- Bank of England
- The Basil Samuel Charitable Trust
- Charles S French Charitable Trust
- The Covid-19 Support Fund
- The David Family Foundation
- The Department of Health Carers' Support Fund managed by the Community Foundation for NI
- The Department of Health and Social Care through the Health and Wellbeing Alliance
- The Francis Winham Foundation
- The James Weir Foundation
- The John Coates Charitable Trust
- John Ellerman Foundation
- The Joseph and Lillian Sully Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Hellen Roll Charity
- Hollyhock Charitable Foundation
- Marie-Louise von Motesiczky Charitable Trust
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- The Will of Pamela Joyce Chaplin
- Pears Foundation
- Peter Harrison Foundation
- Regina Blitz
- The Robertson Trust
- The Will of Roger Keith Barnes
- Smart Energy GB
- Sport England
- The Steel Charitable Trust
- The W A Cargil Fund



Across the UK today 5.7 million people are carers — supporting a loved one who is older, disabled or seriously ill.

Carers UK is here to listen, to give carers expert information and tailored advice. We champion the rights of carers and support them in finding new ways to manage at home, at work, or in their community.

We're here to make life better for carers.

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